

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-10 and 12-14 are pending in the application and have been allowed.

By this Amendment, claims 1, 5-7 and 12 have been amended with minor changes. For example, claim 12 has been amended to recite an ND filter fixed to at least one of the aperture blades, and claims 1 and 5-7 have been amended to replace "slit mask" with --mask--. No new matter has been introduced by this Amendment. Entry of this amendment before examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1, 3-10 and 12-14 would be pending.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of this application.

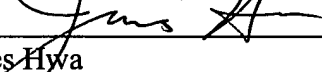
AUTHORIZATION

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 13-4503, Order No. 1232-5094.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No. 13-4503, Order No. 1232-5094.

Respectfully submitted,
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